

5-6-2020

## The Observer

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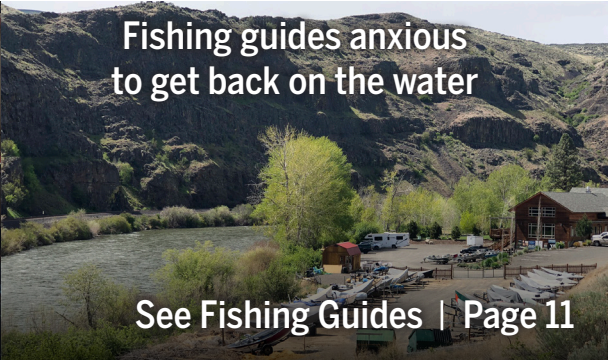
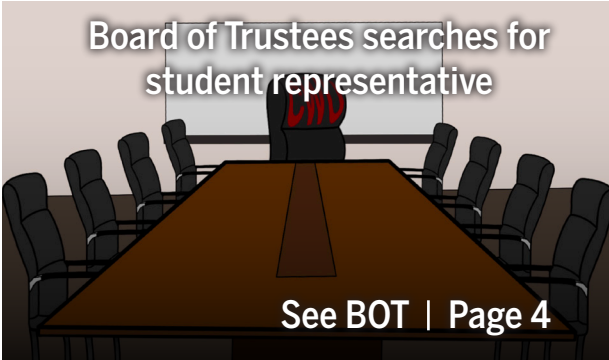
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Vol. 116 NO. 5 | May 6 - May 12, 2020

# The Observer

By the students, for the students

## Protesters oppose state health orders

Bailey Tomlinson  
News Editor

The Kittitas County Business Coalition held their fourth protest against statewide health orders in front of the county courthouse on May 1. According to coalition co-founder Jessica Karraker, at the core of the protest was the concern that businesses, particularly small, local businesses, are being treated unfairly under the recent restrictions.

“It’s actually part of our constitution. You’re innocent until proven guilty. We’ve already deemed these nonessential businesses as guilty,” Karraker said. “Guilty of spreading COVID-19, guilty that they wouldn’t take charge and to protect their families and their customers and our clients.”

Karraker said she felt officials were not as open to public comment as they should be, and that she’s been imploring them to hear the voices of the people.

“I’ve emailed Laura Osiadacz, she’s my commissioner for my district, seven times, and I’ve only gotten one response,” Karraker said. “Where’s the transparency? Where’s the fact that we’re not being heard? Or at least we don’t feel like we’re being heard.”

According to Kittitas County Commissioner Laura Osiadacz, commissioners are operating as openly as they can, but addressing every comment that’s sent to them may not be feasible.

“I was attacked a little bit today about not replying to every single



Nicholas Tucker/*The Observer*

Dozens of protesters gathered outside the Kittitas County Courthouse to protest against statewide stay-at-home orders.

email. We’ve been getting hundreds of emails, and I’m not saying that I don’t want to get back to everybody. I’m just doing my very best to handle the mag-

nitude that we’ve been receiving,” Osiadacz said. “We take this very seriously. We want to make sure that nobody here feels like they’re marginalized, or

their needs aren’t met or minimized by anything we’re doing.”

Continued on Page 3

## Empty dorms at empty campuses



Casey Rothgeb/*The Observer*

Most dorms are empty due to the closure of the Ellensburg campus. Students living in tight quarters are an increased risk for rapid COVID-19 infection.

Samantha Cabeza  
Staff Reporter

Students made a decision right before spring quarter whether to stay in Ellensburg or to go home to their families. Many students decided to go home and stay safe with their families.

Wherever students were at the beginning of the stay-at-home order was where they would have to stay put, according to an email sent out by President Gaudino. This decision was based on CWU’s health directors and the Kittitas County Health Department.

Housing sent out an email in late March telling students if they were not in their dorms, they needed to tell housing they were no longer going to be staying there for the quarter via MyCWU.

Housing gave students the option to ship items home if they needed them urgently. If not, their dorms would essentially turn into

a storage unit, holding their items until the students could return to it in the future. The locks will remain changed until the health department says when it is safe to return.

The housing website states, “per the Kittitas County Health Order, students are strongly encouraged, whether they live on or off campus, to stay in place.”

Students who decided to go home for spring quarter had to either come back to Ellensburg and remove all of their items and completely move out, or leave their items in their dorm as the locks were changed so nobody could access them.

Brendan White, a freshman undecided major, said he was already home when the email was sent out.

“Since I had the choice to go home, I decided to leave [CWU] because I was feeling homesick,” White said.

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# FISH accepting homegrown produce

Michelle Reyes  
Staff Reporter

Ali Dermond, a local gardener, reached out to FISH through their Facebook page asking if they are accepting homegrown produce. Dermond said she has a sense that there is going to be a lot of need this year. She has a large garden space that can grow more food than she can eat or process on her own and wants to donate. The food bank is encouraging local gardeners to plant extra produce in their home gardens to donate to those who need it.

Peggy Morache, executive director of FISH said they are encouraging people to start a garden and are calling them “victory gardens.”

According to the group’s Facebook page, during WWI and WWII, governments encouraged people to plant gardens not only to supplement their rations but also to boost morale. It would boost morale because gardeners could feel empowered by their contribution of labor and rewarded by the produce grown.

Morache said in the summer FISH will start a “Food For All” farm, and it will be an ongoing project where the group will be growing their own produce. As of publication, they are still looking into two locations for that project.

Rebecca Griswold, a local gardener, learned about FISH accepting homegrown produce through Facebook as well.

Griswold said when her family of five and herself were looking into moving to a new place, they looked for a place where they would be able to be self-sus-

taining. Their idea was to have a garden, but they decided to plant more than what she and her family needed so they could contribute to the community.

“I’ve planted over 25 corn. I have green beans growing, snap peas, butter lettuce, spinach, lettuce green variety, onions, potatoes,” Griswold said. “... We’ll have some pumpkins for people to come pick for those who can’t afford to buy them.”

Dermond said in December 2011, her family, which includes three kids, was in a really hard spot. When they needed FISH, Dermond said FISH did not second guess why they were there, but made sure they went home with enough food for the family.

“That is just so meaningful to me and to have a resource like that in our community is so huge because everyone gets in a tough spot sometimes, and we all have to eat. That’s basic,” Dermond said. “Since then, my Christmas list always has ‘donations to FISH Food Bank’ on it. It’s a soft spot in my heart.”

Dermond said her garden is about 1,000 square feet and she can grow a little of everything. She has lettuce, spinach, cilantro, carrots, kale, broccoli, cauliflower, peas, tomatoes, tomatillos, peppers, onions and more.

“I think it is always rewarding to plant your own homegrown produce, and maybe it is even more so right now, where I think a lot of us in this time of uncertainty like to know that we can be self reliant,” Morache said. “And having our own gardens and producing our own food is one way to do that.”

According to Morache, donations



Takashi de Leon/*The Observer*

**FISH is currently limiting Friday visitors to high risk clients in response to COVID-19.**

have increased during the pandemic because the community knows there are so many people who need help.

“You do not have to be a farmer or have a super green thumb. There are lots of varieties of vegetables that people can grow that do really, really well here in this valley,” Griswold said. “Even if somebody is able to plant one or two more things and contribute beyond their family members, I think we can help feed our community.”

Griswold said she feels there are a lot of people out there right now having a hard time getting by. The more the coronavirus spreads, she thinks more people are going to be affected, therefore she definitely

wants to contribute what she can.

“There are no restrictions. If [a donation] is a large quantity, which sometimes we get especially from farmers, we like to know ahead of time that it’s coming. We’ll clean it and bag it ourselves,” Morache said. “Right now, we’re trying to keep the handling of any sort of fresh food to a minimum, so we’re bagging it and giving it to clients bagged.”

Morache said the coronavirus pandemic should not stop local gardeners from donating fresh produce.

“A lot of people are pitching in the way they can. I can’t make masks, but I can grow food. I thought that would be a good way to pitch in,” said Dermond.

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### Lead Graphic Designer

Teagan Kimbro

### Graphic Designer

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### Graphic Designer

Riel Hanson

### Advertising

Cait Dalton  
Email: Cait.Dalton@cwu.edu  
Central Washington University  
400 East University Way  
Lind Hall 109  
Ellensburg, WA 98926

### Staff Reporters

Della Mae Babcock

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### Photographers

Peighton Bortle

Takashi de Leon

### Comic

Tiffany Tablang

### Staff Copy Editor

Jayce Kadoun

### Faculty Adviser

Cynthia Mitchell / cwuobserveradviser@gmail.com

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# Protestors oppose state health orders



Photos by Nicholas Tucker/ *The Observer*

The May 1 protest was the fourth protest that the Kittitas County Business Coalition has put on. They aim to put pressure on state government to reopen local businesses.

Continued from Page 1

According to Osiadacz, much of the community’s frustration came from Gov. Jay Inslee’s Stay Home, Stay Healthy order. These stemmed specifically from inconsistencies that prevented certain sectors from continuing to work, even if they could implement appropriate COVID-19 prevention measures.

“There was a lot of inconsistencies in [Inslee’s] order that allowed certain sectors to work and certain sectors not to work, but there wasn’t a lot of rhyme or reason why he made those choices,” Osiadacz said. “And some of those areas that aren’t allowed to work feel like they could use the safety procedures and operate in a safe manner using the social distancing, and wearing masks and doing the right things to ensure to

“It’s been an extremely challenging process for us to see the people in our community hurting.

-Laura Osiadacz, County Commissioner

reduce the spread.” The meeting concluded with a call from Karraker to pressure the Board of County Commissioners for Eastern Washington into opposing Inslee’s Stay Home, Stay Healthy order.

“Ideally, we need 20 counties to stand up and to say that we’re no longer in an emergency,” Karraker said, addressing the crowd.

Karraker also said she was proud that commissioners were willing to speak at the gatherings. She said she’s been reaching out to County Commissioner Brett Wachsmith and County Public Health Officer Dr. Mark Larson asking them to speak as well.

“[Wachsmith and Larson speaking is] the next step. And you know, maybe we don’t [have them speak],” Karraker said. “Maybe the commissioners make the decision that there isn’t a health emergency. Maybe they band together

and they take control back from the west side and they say, ‘you know what, as a county, we trust our people. We know that they’ll do the right thing. They’ve proven it by the fact that we’ve had zero positive COVID-19 cases in three weeks. We trust them.’”

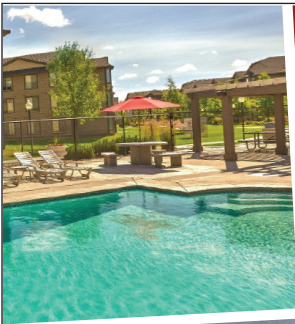
Osiadacz said one of the primary goals of the protest was to encourage leaders at the state level to stand up for the freedoms of the people in the community.

“I do agree that there’s a lot of things that we could continue to do while practicing our social distancing

and having a safe workplace utilizing the guidelines for COVID-19,” Osiadacz said. “But people really haven’t had the opportunity to demonstrate that they’re capable of doing so.”

According to Osiadacz, one of the most prominent examples of this is certain types of construction being allowed to continue while others were not.

“It’s been an extremely challenging process for us to see the people in our community hurting, seeing people wanting to be safe, follow the safe precautions, and be able to go back to work,” Osiadacz said.



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# Search continues for student trustee

Ty McPhee  
Staff Reporter

The CWU Board of Trustees (BOT) student representative position is set to be filled following the end of current student member Alex Harrington’s 2019-20 term.

Applications for the position ended April 24 with at least three students applying as of April 23 according to ASCWU Legislative Affairs.

The student who enters into this position will be a full voting member on all issues except matters related to hiring or discipline of personnel, professor contracts and employer and union contracts.

Director of Legislative Affairs Nancy Canales-Montiel said students weren’t as informed of the position opening as previous years, but ASCWU had been promoting it on social media.

“The hardest part is getting people to apply right now. The position is a big one, I think it’s probably arguably the biggest one and most important that we have on campus,” Canales-Montiel said. “The main thing we want to highlight is since President Gaudino announced his retirement next summer, the BOT member will have a very large say in who is the next university president. That’s a lot for one student.”

According to Canales-Montiel, there had only been three applications, but that number was from a week prior to April 23.



Graphic by Riel Hanson

“The way it works is you would apply, and then the VP of Legislative Affairs ... will put our opinion on our top three and then we’ll send it to the governor. And then on their end they’ll take care of things,” Canales-Montiel said.

When asked about a protocol in place for if no one was accepted into the position, Canales-Montiel said it’s never happened before and, should someone

be the only applicant, they would most likely automatically get the position.

The current law for Washington (RCW 28B.35.100) doesn’t clearly define what the case would be should there be no applicants for the student BOT position. Since there were applications, CWU will be submitting the ones that have been turned in so that Gov. Jay Inslee will be able to choose the next in line.

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# Get walking with Wildcats on the Move Walking Challenge

Karina Severino  
Staff Reporter

Faculty, staff and students are on the move with the six week Wildcats on the Move Walking Challenge. The challenge is meant to be a fun way for people to get some exercise.

“We have been doing this for three years,” Kathy Johnson, a human resources (HR) partner said. “We’re doing it for wellness, just to get people thinking about health and get them up and moving.”

The Wildcats on the Move Walking Challenge is for individuals or teams of three. The challenge goes on from April 19 to May 31.

There are four categories participants can be in. Daffodil category is an average of less than or equal to 60,000 steps per week per member. Tulip category is an average between 60,000 and 74,000 steps.

Lavender category is an average between 74,000 and 94,000 steps and Rose category is an average of more than 94,000 steps per week per member.

As of April 27, there were 47 teams and 13 individuals participating in the challenge. Of those participating, 122 are staff, five are faculty and 27 are students.

“The numbers have gone down this

quarter,” Johnson said. “It’s kinda harder to get the word out when we’re all in different places.”

Johnson said due to the stay-at-home order, they have seen a decline in numbers, but it was expected.

The committee had a harder time getting the word out this quarter due to campus being closed.

The challenge originally started off as an event for staff from 51 departments across campus.

According to Douglas Fulp, assistant director of the Wellness Center, HR and the Wellness Center decided to collaborate and make this challenge available to the students.

“I really love the collaboration that we have been able to work with. To connect the staff, faculty and students,” Fulp said. “It’s just really great to be able to promote health on a broader, environmental level and to help everyone understand that everyone is included in this idea of just getting up and moving.”

Autumn Wilson, an anthropology major, just recently heard about the challenge.

“I think it’s a good idea. I mean people being cooped up isn’t good,” Wilson said. “To have a goal to achieve and exercising by just walking is a good idea. I don’t know when... possibly in the future



Peighton Bortle/*The Observer*

**Due to classes being online, many students decided to go back home. Many dorms are now left empty.**

it would be a cool idea to get a group of friends together and [participate].”

The challenge is more than just competing for the highest number of steps. There is also a team photo competition. In previous years, teams have taken creative pictures for the photo contest.

“It’s great to see how people can be so creative and take such fun pictures,” Johnson said. “It is different now since we have to make sure our participants

are practicing social distancing.”

Johnson said they’re really encouraging participants to follow social distance guidelines while they are walking and taking team pictures.

“We weren’t sure if we should do it this quarter,” Johnson said. “But we think if people really tried and were reminded to follow those guidelines, it can work. We just really want to emphasize the importance of that.”

# How the pandemic affects sleep schedules

Gabriel Lizama  
Staff Reporter

Students are in the fourth week of classes and are adapting to the online environment. With no in-person office hours or classes to show up to on campus, students are forced into developing new sleeping patterns to adjust.

With the stay-at-home order currently in place until May 31, students face the battle of working remotely.

Jared Cloud, a senior business and administration major with a specialization in finance, said he misses a regimented schedule on campus.

Being in class allowed him to understand what was expected day to day. He said showing up forced him to pay attention since he was already there.

Cloud said adapting to the online format was not a hard transition until the quarter progressed. Cloud enjoys having the ability to sleep in and not wake up early to conduct morning workouts. Cloud is taking 18 credits this quarter and said it has been his biggest challenge in four years. The online format consumes a lot of time for him.

A normal day for Cloud starts at 7 a.m. taking care of his dog, working out, doing homework, having family time and doing more homework.

Cloud said his biggest recommendation for professors is to be flexible during this time.

“One thing that I think is important for professors is that they should not compensate for more assignments for not having in person classes,” Cloud said.

Cloud said he hasn’t lost motivation to do things but looks at this as a test of discipline and keeps in mind his end goal of graduating. However, Cloud misses the friendships and bonds that were created on campus.

“My friends are my family away from home and I can rely on them for anything,” Cloud said. “They make everything in life better.”

Bram Wiggins, a senior public relations major, said he hasn’t felt any change to his sleep schedule. Wiggins has experienced taking two classes previously online and is familiar with virtual learning.

Wiggins said he misses being in person for classes. He said the biggest problem with online classes is how long it takes professors to reply to emails because students end up having to put assignments off. Another difficulty he has is the amount of time it takes to do all his assignments.

Wiggins said he’s definitely lost motivation to do homework due to being distant from professors and not being able to socialize in person.

“Not having the ability to go and talk to people and socialize really sucks,” Wiggins said. “Everyday is the same thing and it gets boring doing the same things everyday.”

During his free time, Wiggins enjoys going on long walks outside. He looked forward to May 5 because restrictions were lifted on hunting and fishing.

Health Education Coordinator Sabeth Jackson has been a health educator for three years. Jackson said it’s important for

students to maintain their overall health, especially during these times. Jackson said college is a time when sleep is often ignored and is one of the most important aspects of cognitive development.

There are multiple things that affect sleep patterns, including social opportunities, studying late and using different substances, according to Jackson.

The minds of college students are still developing and require nine hours a night to fully develop, which is not what a typical college student gets, according to Jackson.

There are studies that show sleep deprived students perform significantly worse than those who were not deprived, Jackson said.

Jackson remembers being a college student and cramming for a test. She thought if she stayed up studying, she would perform better. Jackson said if students work harder at the expense

of sleep, they may not even be aware of the effects and perform worse. According to Jackson, the biggest challenge for students is figuring out how to work remotely online.

Jackson said everything students are accustomed to is not the same and will require more discipline.

“Setting specific times to do work and separating locations is the most important thing to create a schedule or structure for students at home,” Jackson said.

Jackson recommends students adjust as necessary to be successful.

“During this time it is important to be patient, kind and do the best during these times,” Jackson said.

Jackson said the Wellness Center is offering a new course in May that is available to students to help with what they need in different areas such as sleep, study skills and health.



Graphic by Riel Hanson



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During the epidemic, many businesses have been forced to close their doors indefinitely. Marijuana dispensaries, however, have not suffered the same fate. According to Washington state's list of essential businesses, cannabis retailers fall under the category of workers in other medical facilities.

"Everybody's business is essential for them," Robert Hendrix, owner of Cannabis Central said. "I feel fortunate to be tagged as an essential business. Very fortunate."

As business continues for Cannabis Central, special rules and changes have been made to how the store operates.

"We're cleaning profusely," Hendrix said. "We have the hand sanitizers, we've got the Clorox wipes, we've got the disinfectant to clean the floor, we vacuum."

Aside from cleaning, Cannabis Central has also made some changes to help people follow social distancing guidelines. They use tape markings on the floor and offer curbside pickup for those who feel uncomfortable walking into the store.

"It's not a problem," Hendrix said. "We love our customers and especially the elderly who might need a little extra attention through this."

Although social distancing has caused people to leave

cleaning strategies, tape indicators on the floor and the introduction of curbside pickup. In addition, the store has installed a rope barrier around the front registers to keep customers from physically contacting the counters.

"We've limited our maximum number of people in the store to 10," Baker said. "We're keeping a constant headcount."

Although they've had to implement a fair amount of safety precautions in the store, Baker said the changes haven't made their jobs too much harder.

"Everybody has kept a really positive attitude," Baker said. "I think we're all in the same mindset that we're very grateful to be employed. The people who are here have been continuing to work just as hard trying to keep it clean but also present the idea that this is still a safe place, this is still the same place that it was before."

Baker said it feels like the store is doing the right thing by remaining open.

"The way that people open up to us and explain how grateful they are to be able to come here and to get the things that are helping them through whatever it may be," Baker said. "I think if we were to shut down, it would be really hard for them."

## "We're keeping a constant headcount"

— Nikki Baker, Fire House Manager

their homes less and less, Hendrix said Cannabis Central's April earnings were looking to be better than they were at the same time last year.

"We've had some bigger days than normal because there have been scares that the state was going to shut us down like they did so many businesses," Hendrix said. "People were stocking up in anticipation maybe of us being shuttered."

While the store has been doing well, Hendrix said more labor-intensive vendors and suppliers have been having a tougher time.

"We've tried to be flexible with the vendors as far as deliveries," Hendrix said. "They might be a little more short handed so delivery people might be a little more scarce, and we may have to wait an extra day or two or three."

Another dispensary in Ellensburg, The Fire House, has had a similar experience with changes to its operations and business since the stay-at-home order.

"We've adapted," Fire House Manager Nikki Baker said. "Rather than it putting stress on us, we've just made it work so we can remain open by installing all of these precautions and abiding by the CDC guidelines."

The Fire House has made similar changes to their day-to-day operations as Cannabis Central, including revamped

Emily Russell, a budtender at The Fire House, said smoking marijuana changed her life and helped her through struggles of her own.

"I have multiple sclerosis," Russell said. "Without [marijuana], I'd be struggling more than I am with it."

Even though Russell's diagnosis means she's immunocompromised, she said she's still comfortable coming into work.

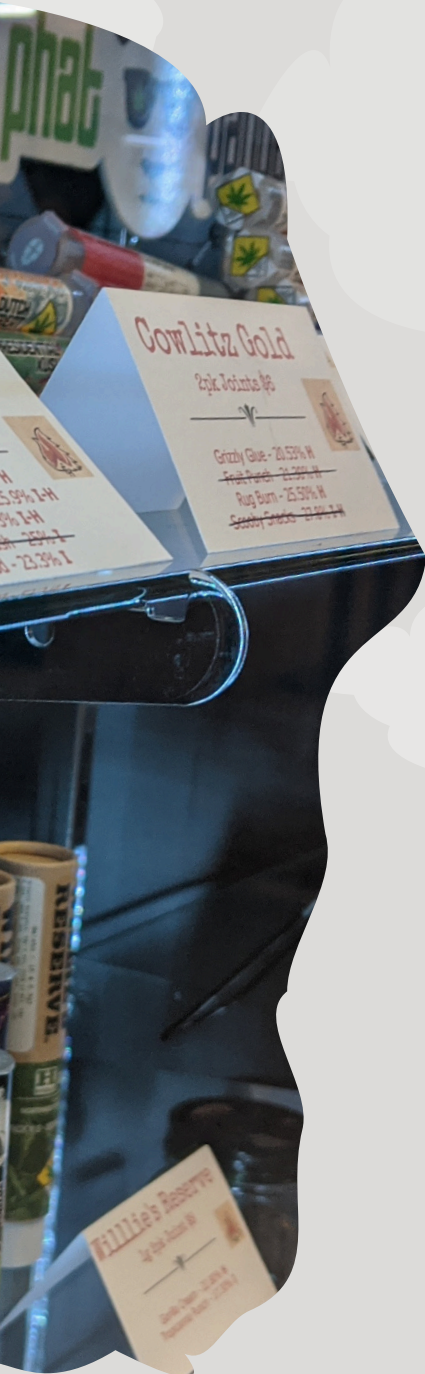
"We've all been super careful," Russell said. "I feel totally safe coming to work, which is cool."

Although marijuana isn't always used for medicinal purposes, Hendrix believes that even people who are technically using the drug recreationally are probably trying to deal with some issues of their own.

"Even recreational customers, they're not using necessarily recreationally," Hendrix said. "They're trying to deal with something...we've heard more conversations about anxiety in the last month or so."

Hendrix said he believes roughly half to two thirds of the customers who come into his store would likely consider dispensaries to be essential.

"If you [asked] them, they would say, 'yeah, it's pretty darn important to me and my life these days,'" Hendrix said.





# How students are using their stimulus check

Due to COVID-19 students who met the requirements received a stimulus check. While some students are spending their stimulus check on groceries, rent and other necessities, other students are using it to splurge.

Mitchell Roland  
Senior Reporter

As layoffs and furloughs continue due to COVID-19, some CWU students believe the stimulus check has helped but more may be needed.

As part of the CARES Act, which was passed by Congress to try to stimulate the economy, some students have received stimulus checks for up to \$1,200. To be eligible for the money, students cannot be claimed as a dependent on their parents' taxes.

Juan Serrano, a junior psychology major, said he used the check to open a savings account and pay off credit card debt he had accrued during the pandemic. Serrano said he had used his credit card to buy groceries for his parents since they have been quarantined. Serrano's mother was diagnosed with COVID-19, influenza A and B and pneumonia, but she has since recovered.

Serrano said he's used the check as a "safety net" to help support his parents. His dad typically works in a warehouse during the cherry season but is unable to due to the virus. The check has helped give him peace of mind during the pandemic.

"What the check did was alleviate any stress that I had," Serrano said.

While Serrano has continued to work

part time during the pandemic, he is worried about potentially losing his job. Others at his job, including Serrano's sister, have already been laid off or furloughed during the pandemic.

Serrano said while the first check helped, he may need a second one if Gov. Jay Inslee's stay-at-home order is extended. Serrano said he is worried about the potential wait for unemployment benefits if he were to be laid off or furloughed from his job.

"I think I'd benefit a lot from [a second check]," Serrano said.

Caleb Valko, a grad student in the natural resource management program, said the stimulus check has helped him make ends meet.

"It's really good for making rent," Valko said. "The stimulus check provides a little bit of a cushion."

While the stimulus check helped, Valko said he needs more.

Valko said he's tried to file for unemployment since the middle of March. It's been a month later and he still hasn't received any money.

"I've got a lot of money going out and no money coming in," Valko said. "I'm worried, but I'm not letting it be the only thing I think about."

Eli Storlie, a junior computer science



Graphic by Riel Hanson

major, said he's used most of the money on groceries but did use some of it on miscellaneous Amazon shopping.

"I didn't really need it, but extra money is always nice," Storlie said.

Storlie said he was working part time before the pandemic and was expecting to work full time during spring break but has since been furloughed from his job.

Storlie said he has not been told when he may go back to work.

Even though he isn't working, Storlie said if the stay-at-home order continues, he would not likely need a second stimulus check.

"Personally, that's not the case for me because I have money saved up," Storlie said. "I would probably be fine."

# Empty dorms at empty campuses



Casey Rothgeb/The Observer

Due to classes being online, many students decided to go back home. Many dorms are now left empty.

Continued from Page 1

He left before finals week when classes went online. Housing offered to mail some of his belongings home, but he decided to leave them there.

The locks on his dorm were then changed as he decided to stay in place in Snohomish, Washington.

"I wish I knew about this earlier. I would have gone back and made an emergency trip to my dorm," White said.

White's online classes are on a schedule that is at his own pace.

He doesn't have any Zoom classes to attend, which means his schedule is more freed up than when he was doing classes in person at school.

Trevor Peden, a junior elementary education major, chose to go home because he felt it would be better for him mentally to be home with his family.

"I feel better being home because

I appreciate things at home a little bit more. It's like when my family does the dishes," Peden said. "With my parents, we take turns on who cooks and who washes the dishes. At my dorm, we did our own dishes."

Peden said his schedule feels consumed with a lot of busy work, but nonetheless he still feels like he isn't that busy.

He is not forced to a strict schedule during the day, which means he can choose to do things when he wants.

"I prefer living at school but I definitely enjoy being at home more," Peden said. "I miss being at school because I miss my friends, but I like being at home because I could work for the local elementary school, if it was open."

Students still living in dorms still have access to Dining Services in the SURC. Social distancing is being practiced and there are limited hours where students can get food. Although the SURC is open, every other campus resource is closed until it's safe to open again.

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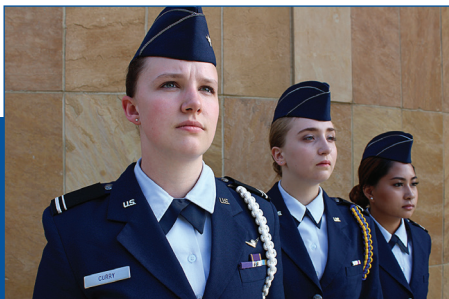
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Graphic by Teagan Kimbro

# Stay social with school spirit

Taylor Clark  
Columnist

When beginning life at a new school, it can be difficult to get to know other people and feel comfortable doing it.

Noticing that a lot of individuals around campus were involved with different clubs and activities changed my mindset and overall thoughts about participating. I wanted to be a part of something, especially without playing a specific sport for the school, was more real than ever. The driving force from this was being able to participate and be involved without being included in a sports team. This gave me a sense of hope as the new year started.

There are several benefits of being social. An article titled “6 Health Benefits of Being Social,” said when people choose to be social, they can add years to their life, reduce their risk of stroke and potentially boost their immune system. Being social can also reduce or delay the risk of memory loss or Alzheimer’s disease.

Being social can also relieve pain. A study done at Brigham Young University, UT showed loneliness and isolation can have a bigger impact on someone’s life span than obesity. The study also showed that spending time with friends and family can lower your blood pressure and reduce inflammation in your body. Another study done at Carnegie Mellon University, PA found that being more social increased one’s resistance to colds and flu.

Personally, I know I feel more relaxed and less overwhelmed when I spend time with family and friends. This really becomes apparent after a particularly long and stressful day.

Having good mental health is

just as important, if not more important, than having strong physical health. An article titled “The Health Benefits of Socializing” says when one has an active social life, the result will be both better physical and mental health. When socializing, one’s feelings of well-being are boosted and the feelings of being depressed or alone are decreased immensely.

This comes into play when trying to decide whether to participate in an event that the university or the community might be holding. If someone is on the fence about this, go for it!

The importance of being involved with your peers is crucial to someone in the long run with regards to both their physical and mental health.

Putting yourself out there and participating in school events can be scary at times, but more likely than not, the people that put an event together would be nothing but excited to see a fresh face.

Some events that are easy to attend without much effort include sporting events or sporting activities. As a spectator at a basketball game, you don’t have to worry about playing the sport or being involved in what you’re watching specifically. You are more able to focus on the people around you as well as just enjoy the overall atmosphere that comes from any sort of sporting event.

I encourage anyone who wants to attend an event or activity on campus to do it. The benefits that you gain as an individual are unmatched and the best part is, everyone else is right there with you.

Step out of your comfort zone and put yourself out there a little bit. The results will blow you away and the people around you as well.



# Senior athletes making pivotal life decision

The NCAA allowed all senior athletes who had their spring season canceled an extra year of athletic eligibility. However, some student athletes had already prepared for life after college and will have to skip their final season.

Holly Hunter  
Staff Reporter

Just like most of the world, sports have taken a pause during the COVID-19 pandemic. For NCAA spring sport athletes participating in baseball, softball and track and field, the short seasons they started have been canceled. The NCAA did grant an extra year of eligibility to those whose seasons have been lost.

### CWU Baseball

Senior infielder Cameron McGrath said he's going to stay at CWU an extra year. The infielder plans to use that time to learn and play more baseball.

"For me, ending my career on a season that never fully finished was kind of the decision I made," McGrath said.

Being able to have a reset on a new year, and a full season next year is something McGrath is looking forward to with the extra eligibility. He'll also get the opportunity to further his education while doing so.

"[My team] is like my family. Right now we should be playing baseball, and not being with them is hard," McGrath said. "It would just be too hard not to go finish a whole year with them."

McGrath plans to start his masters in athletic administration in the fall while using the extra year of eligibility to still play baseball.

### CWU Track and Field

Senior track and field pole vaulter Halle Irvine said she won't use her eligibility right away, if she decides to use it at all. That doesn't mean Irvine still doesn't have big plans for her future.



Graphic by Teagan Kimbro and Riel Hanson

"I'm planning on going to physician's assistant school after I graduate this spring, so currently I don't have any plans to use [the extra eligibility]," Irvine said.

She said in order to use the extra year, she would need to be at a school that has her program and a track program for women pole vaulters.

"I'd obviously have to be somewhere that would offer it, and just know that I could manage the course load of PA school while still being a student athlete for that year," Irvine said.

Senior track and field distance runner Delaney Clem's future does not include an extra year in the sport.

"I'm starting vet school in the fall at WSU and it would be too stressful to do everything, so I can't," Clem said.

While she isn't taking advantage of the situation, she said other student athletes who are on the fence about the situation should, if everything's right.

"I would say they definitely should [take the extra year of eligibility] because you are only an athlete for so long," Clem said.

Irvine has not been fully healthy since her All-American sophomore season. Going into this quarter, she was done rehabbing from surgery. She felt like she was just starting to ease back into competing at a high level before the season was canceled.

"Coming back this season off of a surgery that took like six months to recover from, I kind of felt like I was ready to get going," Irvine said. "I was really excited for those last moments, but I won't get those this year."

McGrath is happy to get the extra time to finish a full season rather than having one end because of something nobody can control.

"We want the season to end either [by] winning the championship, or flying out to center field losing our last game. We want to end on a win or a loss, not on something we can't control," McGrath said.

Clem was also an athlete on the cross country team so she did get somewhat of an "end" to her time as a student athlete, but she still had more she wanted to accomplish as a track and field athlete.

"We all had goals, I wanted to move up in the record boards, my roommate Sam, a thrower, wanted to break the record, and then to not even have a chance like you're just done, that was kind of crazy," Clem said.

### CWU Softball

Softball head coach Alison Mitchell said the decision whether or not to come back for one last season will be tough for athletes because they usually spend their senior year of college preparing for life after school.

"Your life is gonna happen post-graduation and to have something like this thrown at you and then be given an opportunity if you want to come back and play again, it's a big life decision for a lot of the athletes," Mitchell said. "I'm being respectful of all of them and giving them their time... the majority of them are wanting to come back and they're just trying to sort out what that means for them."

## Athletics maintaining facilities despite canceled seasons

Rey Green  
Staff Reporter

The Nicholson Pavilion has less traffic going in and out of it this quarter due to the COVID-19 pandemic. A majority of workers are on stay-at-home orders because they are not essential workers. CWU Athletics' strength and conditioning coach Erik Hoium said President James Gaudino has made it very clear to his employees during a staff meeting that they will keep their jobs and be given the opportunity to reduce their hours for safety reasons.

"When something like this happens, it's our biggest concern for our friends, co-workers, people we spend every day working with is, are we all still going to have a job? But the university has been amazing through this process," Hoium said.

Hoium said the two custodians in the Nicholson Pavilion have certain days they're in the building and have done a good job of maintaining their regular cleaning schedules.

Hoium said one custodian is on his normal schedule of sanitizing and waxing the floor in the weight room. The custodian typically cleans the cage side of the weight room every Thursday and the glass side every Friday.

Hoium said with regards to the weight room there isn't a lot to take care of since there are no athletes going in and out of the weight room. Hoium said the weight room has no need to be cleaned as frequently as it was being cleaned before.

Maintenance workers have been on the same routine, but the basketball court, weight room and field house have some new upgrades.

Going into spring break, Associate Athletic Director Gary Hyatt said there were plans for maintenance to be done during that time. The COVID-19 stay-at-home order has given more time for these projects to be done properly in less of a rush.

Hoium said a crew came in and repainted the field house and the cage weight room. They painted the walls black and off white. Before painting the walls, the weights had to be removed. After the painting was finished, Hoium and the facilities crew rearranged the weight room and made it look more organized. The cage side of the weight room has some new equipment added to use once schools open and when the athletes are back.

Hyatt and Hoium both said the field house hasn't been repainted since it was built in 1959, and it was desperately needed. Hyatt said the custodians were also able to do deep cleans on all the locker rooms and the weight room. Hyatt added that the building is as clean as it has been in years.



Nicholas Tucker/The Observer

Athletic facilities on campus aren't being used by student athletes this quarter. Custodians and groundskeepers are still tending to athletic courts and fields for the time being.

"The projects that have been done are the Nicholson gymnasium floor being re-finished. We were able to sand down and make it look brand new. We also painted a new three-point line that will go into effect for men's basketball, moving it back to NBA range so we now have two," Hyatt said.

Hyatt said the football field has an artificial surface and does not need much maintenance with no spring football practice. The baseball field won't have much work done on it since the season has been canceled. The grounds crew does not have much to do besides watering, fertilizing, weeding and mowing.



# Fishing guides anxious to get back on the water

Mitchell Roland  
Senior Reporter

While rules for recreational fishing have been relaxed in the state, fishing guides statewide are still anxiously waiting to hold tours.

Last week Gov. Jay Inslee announced plans to allow fishing in the state as long as participants practice social distancing. However, commercial fishing is still prohibited in Washington which means guides on the Yakima River are still unable to conduct fishing trips.

Alex Kuyper said he guides to earn some supplemental income. Kuyper planned on guiding five to seven full day trips during his spring break. Kuyper said each eight-hour trip costs \$425.

“That right there has been a pretty big financial impact to me,” Kuyper said. “It’s been a little tough.”

Kuyper, who is also a counselor at a high school in Seattle, said since he only guides tours part time, the impact for him has not been nearly as bad as other guides who do it full time.

With rules being relaxed for recreational fishing, Kuyper said he is optimistic the season will start on June 1 but there is no guarantee that it will happen.

“I’m not holding my breath for that,” Kuyper said.

Typically, during the peak season in the summer, Kuyper guides between three to five trips a week. On the trips, there are usually three people on the boat: Kuyper and two anglers.

When he can conduct tours again, Kuyper said he is optimistic people will want to fish.

“My hope is that people will still come out and support the local independent guides,” Kuyper said. “I think it will pick back up pretty quickly.”

Kuyper monitors the weather in Ellensburg and the conditions on the river, and said it’s been frustrating not being able to fish under prime conditions.

“It’s tough being stuck at home,” Kuyper said.

The ban on commercial fishing is also impacting CWU students who guide as a part time job.

Keegan Carlson, a student and part time fishing guide on the Yakima river, said the new rules mean he could fish with his brother and his dad, but he still can’t hold guided tours.

“Nothing really changes on the business side of things,” Carlson said. “From an economic standpoint, I can’t make money.”

Carlson said since they can’t lead tours, he and the other guides have had to find other sources of income. Carlson said he’s currently working at a Dominos Pizza.

“We’ve had to pick up part time jobs to stay afloat,” Carlson said.

Due to COVID-19, Carlson said he’s canceled planned fishing trips during a prime fishing opportunity. Since there is a lack of snow runoff in the Yakima River, Carlson said conditions are ideal to guide tours.

Carlson said he is cautiously optimistic he can start holding tours again next month.

“I’m going to guess that within the next month we’ll be guiding again,” Carlson said.

When the ban on commercial fishing is lifted, Carlson believes some people will be unable to fish due to financial restrictions.



Photo courtesy of Kyle Wilkinson

A sight of the Yakima river at Canyon River Ranch, near Wymer. Local businesses are introducing sanitation and social distancing measures to tackle COVID-19, but most services are still operating.

However, he also thinks over time, those customers will return.

“I don’t think it will hurt us long term,” Carlson said.

Carlson said there is a somewhat false narrative by fishing, you are already socially distanced from people.

“A lot of people say you’re already social distancing when you’re fishing,” Carlson said.

Carlson said while you are away from other people when out on the water, there’s still interactions with other people. He said a

lot of his customers come from other parts of the state, which means they are interacting with employees at gas stations and other businesses while traveling to the river.

Carlson said he also interacts with people at bait shops and grocery stores on days he guides tours.

“There’s definitely some involvement with other people,” Carlson said.

Still, he thinks he could guide tours while maintaining social distancing.

“I think there is a way you could do it,” Carlson said.

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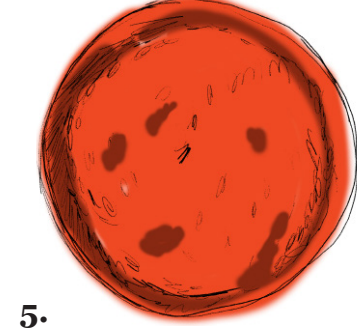
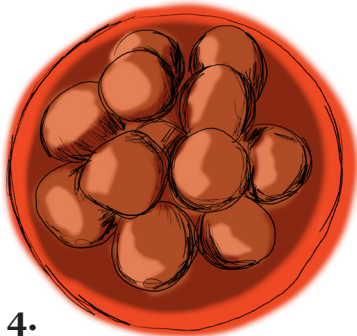
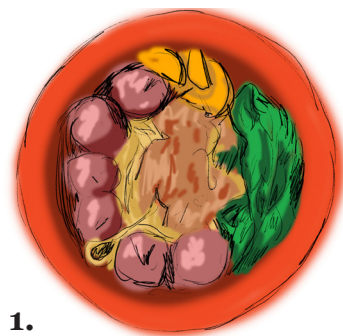




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